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VERSES

GAY AND GRAVE

BY

BISHOP THORNTON

1904

THE STANDARD PRESS, 41 Church Street, Blackburn

PR
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L'ENVOI.

MOST of the pieces in this Booklet belong, in every sense, to the class called "Fugitive." Mere salvage out of much miscellaneous rhyme that came and went in the head of a traveller, as he flitted to and fro on many a weary journey, they would fain elude the scrutiny of the critic, only asking refuge, at some leisure moment, in the sympathetic indulgence of his many friends.

937308

VERSES, GRAVE AND GAY.

PAKIPPIKA

(Polynesian for the "Pacific").

I.

NIGHT ON THE OCEAN.

I CLIMB the deck, and o'er the brine
At noon of night look forth.
We slide across the viewless Line
That sunders South from North.

High in the solemn zenith gleams
A Moon, that casts no shade.
The CROSS peers up: pale URSA's beams
To watery rest are laid.

Around me, while with tireless haste
From surge to surge we press,
The huge PACIFIC's weltering waste
Spreads, drear and fathomless.

II.

ITS HISTORIC PAST.

GREAT Deep! There roll three ages by,
Since thy blue plain at last
Burst on BALBOA'S raptured eye,
Or rocked MAGELLAN'S mast.

Remoter far that hour unknown
When some wild island crew
Launched forth to search thy tides, alone,
In their first frail canoe:

Or on some junk of Asia burst
The storm that drove her free,
And bade the scared explorer first
Gaze on Earth's grandest Sea.

III.

ITS GEOLOGIC PAST.

BUT who shall sound th' abyss of time
Since yon unchanging Deep
First thrilled responsive to the chime
That woke thy primal sleep?

No Isle, no Reef thy sea-bird knew
That flecks thy breast to-day ;
Unbroken rolled the stainless blue
From Chili to Cathay.

Then, sudden as the trump of Doom,
With blast of thunderous steam
Burst from the deep volcano's womb
The pent-up lava stream :

Up through thy oozy floor it leaps ;
Thy billows, whirled on high,
Float frowning, piled in vaporous heaps
Along the low-hung sky.

Roaring from many a sulphurous vent
The red flames glare amain ;
Tossed sea and raging sky present
Dread Chaos' rule again :

Till o'er the vext expanse is cast,
Denser than deepest night,
A pall of age-long gloom.

'Tis past :

Hail, sweet returning Light !

Hail, offspring fair of Terror's hour,
Isles of the Southern Sea!
Hail, wooded peaks that skyward tower
From many a smiling lea!

IV.

THE CORAL AGE.

O WHY was scene thus bright revealed,
If yon steep shores can never
To foot of man their welcome yield,
Swept by rude seas for ever?

Patience! The toiling worm shall soon
Its girdling rampart pile;
Moored safe within the still lagoon
Who dreads the Coral Isle?

Yes! tho' yon Isle itself sink down
Beneath th' encroaching main,
The worm-built reef shall rear its crown
And wave its palms again!

V.

THE SAVAGE ISLANDERS.

MAN came. No record marks the day
The Isles received their Guest.

The Eastern housed the fierce Malay :

The Negro claimed the West.

Their exile pleased the Strangers well :

The ocean swarmed with Man ;

And kingly houses rose and fell ;

And on the Cycles ran.

Alas ! o'er all this beauty shed

A deadlier darkness broods

Than when the fierce volcanoes spread

Their gloom athwart the floods.

O, where did Earth's fallen master learn

His baleful task so well,

To foul her loveliest scene, and turn

Her paradise to hell ?

Red altars by yon palm-grove screened

To some grim idol glow ;

'Mid yon sweet shades the warrior-fiend

Tortures his writhing foe :

To plunge in some deep fiery cone
Wins PELE's aid divine ;
A thousand mangled victims groan
At TAIRI's gory shrine.

Yon emerald peak, to ruby turned
When morn and sunset glow,
Full oft with beacon-sign has burned
Of butchery and woe :

These valleys swarmed with angry life,
And yonder silvery flood
Through scenes of rapine, lust and strife
Rolled dark with human blood.

VI.

THE EUROPEAN NAVIGATORS.

SEE ! To Pacific breeze unfurled,
Pledge of some happier day,
The navies of an elder world
Their meteor flags display.

DE GAMA first ; and, scarce too late
To share th' adventurous van,
MAGELLAN, sweeping from his Strait
Aslant to far Japan :

And ANSON, coursing round the Earth;
And thou, intrepid COOK;
Nobler, for all thy lowly birth,
Than many a gartered Duke!

Would thou hadst dared, when dark HAWAII
Her worship flocked to render,
Meekly to thrust those honors by
Which none to man may tender!

So hadst thou lived, perchance, and worn
Thy glory's stainless flower,
Nor England still her hero mourn,
Slain in his triumph hour.

Where rest thy ashes, LA PÉROUSE?
VANCOUVER'S search is vain;
Yet shall the seed such wand'rer strews
In blessings spring again:

To many a pine-clad shore he brings
Glad news of hope and light:—
Good angel of Hawaiian kings,
Few names than his more bright!

VII.

THE TRADER.

NOT always such the roving fleet
Of commerce, or of war,
Nor Pagans find like cause to greet
The Christian from afar.

The whaler snares unholy game ;
With foulness, force, and fraud
Too oft allied, the Trader's name
Grows to a sound abhorred !

VIII.

THE MISSIONARIES.

FAIR Ship, speed safely o'er the brine,
In whose white flag of love
Floats, of thy gentle task the sign,
An olive-bearing Dove.

Glad Herald, hail, delayed too long !
In thy bright track afar
The Gospel's laggard armies throng
To ply their bloodless war.

TAHITI's idols fall: the flame
Devours thy shrines, WAHU:
Green TONGA peals a Saviour's name
To rocky RURUTU.

Where nameless rites with human life
Once drenched the island sod,
Glad converts turn th' unbloodied knife
On many a prostrate god.

Like incense on the mountain air,
From bowery forest ways,
Floats up the dusky Christian's prayer,
Thrills the blithe chant of praise!

IX.

HEROES AND MARTYRS.

NOT by all-favouring breezes fanned
The Gospel ensign flew,
From ERROMANGA's crimsoned sand
To reef-girt NUKAPU.

Past WILLIAMS' grave, by fell SAVAII,
Alert, yet ne'er dismayed,
A helmsman guides, with keen grey eye,
His white-sailed "Border Maid";

SELWYN : nor plies his toil alone ;
With life untimely spilt
See saintly PATTESON atone
For some vile trader's guilt !

What reck's it, so the triumph-day
Of Truth advanced may be,
And the fair faith of JESUS sway
Each island of the sea !

X.

CHRISTIAN CIVILISATION.

ALL hail, blest Sign, whose beams before
Earth's shadows flee apace !
No more, thou Sea sublime, no more
Be falsehood's hiding-place !

E'en now, where purged PITCAIRNERS kneel
Fester no haunts of Sin ;*
Thy grim FIJIAN pleads to feel
The yoke of England's Queen :

* Norfolk Island was once a Penal Settlement.

And steam-winged fleets from ports newborn
Speed o'er thy heaving plain,
Browbeat the gale, and laugh to scorn
Thy dreaded hurricane.

Soon thy dark depth shall house the thread
That links all lands in one,
And each dread Reef and craggy Head
Blaze with its nightly Sun!

XI.

THE GOAL.

ON! ever on! Wrest right from wrong,—
From Good let Better spring,
Nor hoary blessing, owned too long,
Keep back some loftier thing!

Let Progress live, whate'er may die,
Though with resistless motion
O'er wreck and loss her march must lie,
—And sound thy knell, grand Ocean!

Yes! when one great fast-coming Day
Dawns o'er new Earth and Sky,
The Hand that wipes all tears away
Thy soundless depths must dry.

S.S. "CITY OF NEW YORK,"

CAPTAIN COBB.

Cross the Pacific in the Ship
"The City of New York."

You'll in no boat, where'er afloat,
Ply such a knife and fork!

A fine "free-board" this steamer shews:
The passengers at large
Will get fresh "rolls," as on she bowls,
Free of all extra charge!

Perhaps some fish is what you wish?
Pace the ship's deck one minute,
You've smelt enough, be't smooth or rough,
For all the people in it!

Folks who would cook themselves, will find
No handier place on earth;
Free, if they will, on deck to grill,
Or stew inside their berth.

"What Island's that?" The Sandwich Isles.
"What point is that?" Point Coco.
Where'er you look, men talk of Cook,
From here to Orinoco!

From food there's no escape; I dine,
And learn we're sighting shore;
Of soup and puff I've had enough,
Yet there I see Samoa!

And lovers of full-bodied wines
(They'll wonder how 'tis wrought)
Will find our vast steamship at last
All turning into Port!

'Tis a brave ship: and in her charm
The Captain bears his part:
Weaves,—like some spider,—if you've tried her, —
A Cobweb round your heart!

NO MORE SEA.

On First Sailing for Australia.

IN that New World which God shall frame,
To fill the empty space
Of Earth and Heaven dissolved in flame,
The Sea shall find no place.

Fair is the Sea, and rich its shore;
Yet in yon Heavenly Land
No ocean breeze shall fan us more,
No ripples kiss the strand!

Is it that there, where all is clear,
No dark mysterious Deep
In fathomless abyss may dare
One awful secret keep?

Or is it, lest the heaving wave
Disturb the rest sublime
Of Heaven, with thought of storms that rave
Along the shores of Time?

An ampler cause the Exile finds:
For him 'twere grief and wonder
To trace, in yonder Home,—that binds,—
The Sea,—that parts asunder!

No! when that glad fast-coming Day
Dawns o'er new Earth and Sky,
The Hand that wipes all tears away
The sund'ring Seas shall dry!

O best New World! For thee to sail
With joy from home we sever;
What bliss, that sea-less Shore to hail,
Nor quit that Port for ever!

Yet hath yon Heaven its Crystal Sea,
Where, loud as Ocean's roar,
High anthems to the One in Three
The sleepless Seraphs pour:

And on that Sea of Glass they meet
Whom oceans here divide,
To throng with rapture round His feet
Who once for sinners died!

ANTIPODEAN ASTRONOMY.

YOU may sound the praises forth
Of the old historic North;
Our hemisphere may dub "the under-world";
But, though discovered later,
To the South of the Equator
Is where the sky's chief glories are unfurled!

If it's fine, you may, up there,
See the Great and Lesser Bear
For ever pirouetting round the Pole;
You may watch the prowling Lion,
Or the stars that make Orion
(Like a Satan falling headlong), as they roll:

Like a sprawling W
Cassiopeia's Chair may view
(Not looking safe to sit on, let me tell her):
Cepheus, Lynx, Giraffe and Dragon
Offer nothing much to brag on;
While Auriga yields your one bright Star,—Capella.

Now, pass with me to the South :
Lay your hand upon your mouth
Gazing upward at the splendours overhead !
Leo lies o'erthrown,—supine :
See a new Orion shine—
Reversed,—a Christ, ascending from the dead !

Like a Moon, with tender ray
Gleams our glorious Milky Way,
Shewing here and there a dark, mysterious pool
Where, through patches black, one peeps
Through the interstellar deeps ;
While Magellan's Clouds float near, like discs of wool

Here—with softer light or sterner—
Shine Canopus and Achernar ;
Here, alone, the star that's nearest Earth is seen :
Its parallax motion
Traced o'er Space's barren Ocean,
We've gauged the abysmal interval between !

Scanned through stainless Austral skies
Our stars, to Fancy's eyes,
Have grouped themselves in no ignoble forms :
In the midst a glittering Argo,
With the souls of men for cargo,
To a land of gold seems steering through the storms.

Christian instinct will be nimble
To discern a sacred symbol
In the Altar, the Triangle, and the Cup ;
And O, the wealth of meaning
In the Cross, benignly leaning
O'er our faces, as in wonder we look up !

Yes,—once more, “ the last is first ” :
South's the best sky—North's the worst !
To turn Earth upside down would it be wrong ?
Why, 'twere well the twist were given :—
In the side it turns to Heaven
Methinks the World's been downside up too long !

ANTIPODEAN ZOOLOGY.

IF in Nature's varied Show,—
Her Grand Concert here below,—
For the Clowns and Comic Vocalists you're asking,
I can tell you where you'll meet 'em—
Nothing in the world to beat 'em ;—
In Australia's broad and sunny pastures basking !

There's a Lizard with a frill,—
Walks on two legs, if it will ;
There's the Cockatoo, with screech your ear-drum
Leering eye, and perky crest,— [splitting,
He can mimic with the best :
And a Fox with wings, amid the timber flitting.

You should see "Companions" dancing, --
Now retreating, now advancing,
Cutting capers, like a sailor on the spree !
You should hear the "Jackass" laughing,—
Chuckling slowly first, and chaffing,
And then bursting into Ha ! Ha ! He ! He ! He !

What an element of humour
In the antics of a Boomer,
Or an Iguana, scrambling up a tree !
And particularly whimsical
The Platypus' limbs I call,—
Their use it is impossible to see !

The Bandicoot and Wombat
You may see in uncouth combat ;
Hear the comic ululation of the crows ;
Watch the prickle-backed Echidna
(Nothing ever yet has ridd'n her),
With a piece of bony piping for her nose !

A very saucy bird,
With a manner most absurd,
You may see in crowds, their tails for ever twisting
Up and down, whene'er they jump,
Like the handle of a pump,
And "Who are you?" and "Who are you?" insisting.

Donkeys die,* no doubt, at Home ;
And Bunyips live, and somewhere roam,
Could we search the haunted solitudes that screen 'em,
And the Bunyips would turn out
Our chief humorists, no doubt,
Only nobody, unhappily, has seen 'em !

Perhaps this comic strain
Found in Nature will explain
What ordinary reasoning does not,
How outrageous (to a Briton)
Sound the names the natives hit on,
Topographically marking out a spot.

"Which a proof is easy found" ;
For to Whycheproof I'm bound,—
A sort of place for "sundowners" to cadge in :
And next day to Teddywaddy
I betake my weary body,—
And a stranger name than that I can't imagine !

* "No one ever seed a dead donkey."— S. Weller.

Then from Berriwillock here,
Passing Wirrembirchip near,
I return:—queer spots, by queerer titles known!
Strange, that in this laughing land,
And with fun on every hand,
A deep melancholy claims me for her own!

Mesech Hotel, Tents of Kedar,
Watchemakatcheka, near Kinimakatka,
Victoria, Australia.

MUSINGS ON THE MURRAY RIVER

1876.

I TREAD thy brink, Australian Nile,
And in the heated West afar
Glows, where the fierce sun sank erewhile,
Across vast plains, the Evening Star.

From yonder marsh, the serpents' haunt,
The wild swans rise in dusky crowd;
The bittern's melancholy chaunt
Booms thro' the calm air, clear and loud.

A sable form stands near—the child
Of yonder trackless woods, that lie
To South and West,—forbidding,—wild,—
His father's home in years gone by;

Where erst, ere yet the Stranger came,
He loved to chase, with club and spear,
The land's unshapely forest-game,
By tangled brake and lonely mere.

Strange comrade! Unfamiliar scene!
Strange summer night, that swift descends,—
No twilight hour,—no melting e'en
That day with darkness sweetly blends;

But sudden gloom, enshrouding all,
Till, from the East the Moon up-springing,
In lustrous floods her glories fall,
Back to clear view the landscape bringing,

And o'er yon hamlet gleaming wide,
Where, far from aught of friendly aid,
The Celt and Saxon, side by side,
Their homes amid the wild have made—

Such homes as Exiles have;—and reared
The Thistle, Shamrock, Rose, about
Their rough-built, low-browed dwellings, cheered
Within by romping childhood's shout,—

A tawny brood, that ripens fast
To swarthy manhood, wifely care,
Unconscious of the changeful past,
Unmindful of the homes that were,—

Of weary voyaging, stormy seas,
And that dear Land, still called their own,—
Unmindful;—not forgetful! These
Forget not, for they ne'er have known.

But thou too well hast known, my heart,
Too long hast loved, thy bonds to burst.
To this New Home can aught impart
The spell that chains thee to the first?

Land of my Mother's Grave! To thee
My soul, with quenchless longing, turns:
A vestal flame of hope to see
Thy cliffs once more within me burns:

To see thy cliffs,—once more to breathe
The incense of an English Spring,
And hear, thy leafy elms beneath,
Her morning psalm thy mavis sing!

Can years return that once depart?
Comes childhood back at man's command?
No child can boast two sires: the heart
Can own no second Fatherland!

* * * * *

Behold! In yonder darkling river,—
A fourfold gleam of tender light,—
Some meteor's rays reflected quiver,
Some planet's, than the rest more bright!

I lift my face to Heaven: The CROSS,
In awesome, peerless majesty,
Poised at the summit of its course,
Leans o'er me from the ebon sky:

And hark! No sound assails my sense,
Upgazing in delight and fear,
But to my Soul a Voice from thence
Speaks, and I cannot choose but hear.

"No home on earth a Child of Heaven
May own. The pilgrim mind is best!
Earth's joy for wayside help is given:
Thy halting-place is not thy Rest!

"A better Fatherland is thine,
A fairer Home thy hopes may cheer,
Than that sweet Land beyond the brine,
Or hearth by wife and child made dear.

"To that best Home,—that Fatherland,—
The Cross, unerring, points the track.
With faultless skill thy course is planned:
Doubt not, nor loiter, nor look back!

"The Cross,—the sign of self denied,—
The path *that* marks alone is right.
That way lies Home! Be this thy guide;
Thy pillar, not of cloud, but light!

“Leave idle musings. Brace to tasks
By Heaven assigned, thy wayward heart.
The time for work is short! Who asks
For Home, and rest? Be toil thy part!

Soon on thy gloom-girt path shall shine
Heaven’s cheery Morn,—Earth’s shadows flee;
And in the tearless Home Divine
Thy loved and lost shall welcome thee!”

* * * *

“Speak on!”—But lo! the Dawn on high
Hath crept, the stars with light o’ershading:
Fair jewel of the Southern sky,
Fast on my view thy form is fading!
Stay till I bless thee! From my soul
Thy message ne’er shall fade away,
Till through the vast no worlds shall roll,
And suns are quenched in nightless day.

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS IN THE BUSH.

I SLEPT well at Swan Hill,
For the house was quite still,
And no air in the world could be purer:
And I woke, at a knock,
And a voice, “Four o’clock!”
And I entered the coach for Mildura.

It was dark, but I spied
Fellow-travellers inside ;
And when daylight made everything surer,
I saw two,—short and stout :
And we wobbled about
As the coach reeled along to Mildura.

Never dame for “The Cup”
Was more neatly “made up,”
No damsel was ever demurer,
Than those two who sat by me
On that journey (so slimy) ;
Both bound, like myself, for Mildura.

They were popular, plainly ;
The driver tried (vainly)
To make their seats snug and securer ;
And, when we got in,
Quite a concourse was seen
To welcome those two to Mildura !

Yet to me, all that day,
Not one word did they say :
Never judge was more solemn, or juror ;
And for bite, sup, or “nips,”
Neither opened their lips,
Till we got to the wharf at Mildura.

“Nothing in them,” you’ll say;
“Empty duffers!” But nay!
No street-gossip, I can assure her,
Is fuller of chat,
News, and jokes, and all that,
Than those comrades of mine to Mildura!

Yet in vain might I beckon,
Lean my elbow their neck on,
Might whistle, or sing “Toora Loora;”
Not a sign did they yield:
And their lips were fast sealed,
As the coach rolled along to Mildura.

Was it idiots I’d found?
Or a couple, just bound
To each other “for richer for poorer”?
Neither women nor men!
I must out with it, then—
Two Mail Bags, made up for Mildura!

BUSH TRAVEL ON A FULL-MOON NIGHT

Without Consulting the Calendar.

THICK lips, in a negro, are far from alluring:
The clips of a Bruin will finish you, soon:
But when through the Bush in the night-time you’re touring,
Least welcome of all is—th’ Eclipse of the Moon!

THE FIRST-CLASS-MAN TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

NO Sybarite am I,—no gross Bœotian :
But all your anti-baccy lore I hate !
'Twas study aided by the Weed Nicotian
Won me my brilliant baccalaureate !

SURFACE MINING AND "REEFING," OR THE
WEDDING AND 25 YEARS AFTER.

NEAR Earth's surface glitter fair
Scattered grains of metal rare :
Deep below, a fairer prize
In the rich Reef treasured lies !

Lo ! to-day Love's holy tether
Knits two human lives together :
Forth they pass, 'mid smiles and tears,
On those untried wedded years.

Twine the silver knots ; and tell
Thy glad news, sweet Silver Bell ;
Silver-written missives shower
Blessings on their nuptial hour !

Ah ! but who to-morrow knows ?
As the years their tale disclose
Shall Time's seal be surely set
On this gladness, lasting yet ?

Soon, life's westering Sun must leave
Moonlight silvering all their Eve:
Silver in her tresses sown,—
Silver in his voice's tone!

Lo! through long years boring still,
Time has driven his Diamond Drill.
Scan the tell-tale "core" to-day:—
Is it joy or sadness, say!

O, thank Heaven! Each year that passed
Brought more fondness than the last!
"Then" with "Now" compares no more
Than silver dust with solid ore!

A REPLY POST CARD.

During a visit to Canon Saumarez Smith, the writer had played at kangaroo-hunting with the children, who in their excitement ran a stick into his cheek. Hurriedly departing, he left some properties behind.

[S AIDANI COLL. PRÆFECTUS VERENDISSIMO BALL.

EPISCOPO S.D.

O CAPUT! O nasum! Cur tanta oblivio rerum
Tam magni mentem Præsulis eripuit?
Fusca umbella redit, baculoque armata recurvo;
Reddidit hanc aurigæ inviolata fides:

Ecce, duo apparent nasi-sudaria ; signis
Hoc domini proprium novimus—illud, heræ.
Fasciculus faciendus, et hæc, quæ incuria liquit
Nos apud, en ! vigilans cura remittit eis.

Dabam; in bibliotheca mea, a.d. vi. Id. Feb.

EPISC. BALL. VIRO CANONICO SAUMAREZO SMITHO, S.P.D.

Præsentem baculo transfixit gnatus amicum,—
Absentem versu rodit et ipse pater !
Quî potui nugas curâsse, canonice, maerens
Tales perpetuo deseruisse domos ?
Non satis, umbellam, sudaria, binoculares
Mittere : subreptum cor mihi redde, precor !

[Dabam, a.d. v. Id. Feb.]

AFTERNOON SERMON IN A DAIRYING DISTRICT.

ON roams the Homilist,—head after head,—
Of one grand phrase reluctant to be bilked.
His hearers' thoughts are roaming towards a shed
Where rows of cows stand waiting to be milked !

THE SHADOW OF GOD'S WINGS.

"In the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice."—Ps. lxiii, 7.

WHY GOD, I thank Thee for my pains,
For tortured nerve, and throbbing brow;
No scourge are these,—no captive chains,
But priceless gifts,—the Giver, Thou!

Gifts; though the reasoned page proclaim
Effect the changeless slave of Cause,
And Nature, void of choice or aim,
Bound fast by cold material laws;

Not less Thy gifts, Creative Thought,
Whose all-embracing purpose blends
The lesser with the great, and wrought
The selfsame facts for countless ends:

Whose Bow, ere sin began, had curved
Through every shower that faced the sun,
Nor less, as mystic sign, subserved
Thy covenant with a world undone.

On all the things of sense impressed
Some heavenly aim I love to trace,
And Thee, the Sovereign Lord confessed
At once of Nature and of Grace.

These fierce assaults of pain, a storm
Before whose rage I helpless drift,
To pathologic laws conform,
Yet are they, none the less, Thy gift ;

Bear to my soul a choicer boon
Than ease, or health, or peaceful days,
Or all those minor gifts that tune
My shallow heart to readier praise.

'Tis not in pleasure's hour I learn
The boundless might of trustful prayer,
God's all-sufficing love discern,
And lean with full surrender there.

But now,—while, obstinate and keen,
The strong pangs shoot through brain or limb,—
Or crushed with weakness, harder e'en
Than pain to bear,—I fly to Him !

To Him ! by that stern schooling taught
Truth oft allowed, but grasped at length,
That Man, his skill, his power, are nought,
That God is Everlasting Strength !

I learn what wealth of sweet relief
In some brief Word of Promise dwells ;
I feel new sympathy with grief,—
New love for men within me swells !

Trust,—Patience,—Love! ah! blissful loss,
That yields such gain as these to me!
O joy, to writhe upon a Cross,
To win some likeness, Lord, to Thee!

And Trust,—Love,—Patience,—liker Christ
We grow, as more of these we gain.
Hail, charged for me with lore unpriced,
Resistless ministry of Pain!

Too oft God's gifts through sloth are lost:
O joy, that some I may not lose!
That these, His best, and needed most,
I could not, if I would, refuse!

In Peter's shade their healing place
Some found: and I my better things
Less in the shining of God's face
Than "in the shadow of His wings."

During illness, 1881.

IN A PIANIST'S ALBUM.

WHEN Gregorian chanting torments us, we're told
'Tis the music the first Jewish monarch of old
Was wont from the harp of great David to hear—
And we wonder no longer that Saul threw that spear!

But let Janie L*w*s the keyboard control,
St. Cecilia's image looks in on my soul,
Of minstrelsy Christian who first wore the crown ;—
And I wonder no longer that Angel came down !

BENJAMIN.

“After thee, Benjamin, among thy people.”—Judges v, 14.

HARK ! Across the dreadful field,
Cry by Israel's warriors pealed,
Shrills above the battle din
“After thee, O Benjamin !”

After thee, where blows hail thickly,
Where the brave are falling quickly,
While, to cornet's angry scream,
Maces crash and falchions gleam !

Where the conflict's fiery heart
Beats the fiercest, there thou art !
Where the battered ranks grow thin
Soars the Sign of Benjamin !

All God's Host, with single breath,
Leader hails thee,—wounds and death
Laughed to scorn 'neath thy command,
Son of Israel's strong right hand !

In triumphal songs the fray
O'er the red field dies away ;
Last to yield, and first to win,
Crown the brows of Benjamin !

Benjamin ! Through all the past
This thy motto,—“ First, though last ” ;
Least of all, yet chief confessed ;
Youngest born, but loved the best !

Dear to Jacob's widowed heart,
From this son 'twere death to part :
Dear to Egypt's ruler he,—
Sevenfold must his portion be !

Benjamin ! The blessing said,
On the Patriarch's dying bed,
Far beyond thy sister tribes,
Glorious things to thee ascribes.

“ Son ! The ravening wolf shall be
Fierce, but fittest, type of thee !
Morn by morn go, ravage wide !
Night by night the spoil divide ! ”

“ God's belovèd ! ” Moses cries,—
Ere he climbs the Mount and dies,—
“ Near His side in safety dwell,
'Neath His feathers sheltered well !

" All day long Jehovah's arm
Shields His Benjamin from harm :
Benjamin secure shall rest
Nightly on Jehovah's breast !"

Fierce ! Belovèd ! Both thou art !
Israel moves with breaking heart,
Charged to scourge the ghastly sin
Of their brother Benjamin.

Heroes all, the Benjamites !
Foremost in a thousand fights !
Eglon's portly side must feel
Benjamin's avenging steel :

Routed Nahash stoops to kiss
Thy proud sandal, son of Cis :
Israel's kings with thee begin,
Sceptred child of Benjamin !

In revolt from kingly sway
Rechab, Sheba lead the way :
Mordecai face to face
Spurns the tyrant of his race.

Last, yet best, the martyr line
Owns its crowning hero thine :—
Saul, of sinners once the worst—
Paul, of saints, through grace, the first !

O! with lives like these upbound
May our own at last be found!
Not with thee our souls be dwelling,
Fickle Reuben, ne'er excelling;—

Asher, lingering o'er the feast;
Issachar,—like stubborn beast
Crouching idly 'neath its load,
False to duty and to God!

Naphthali, thy goodly word
Wins high honour from thy Lord;
Yearns my heart to follow thee
Like some loose hind bounding free!

Joseph's bow abides in strength,
Sore abased, upraised at length;
Tree with deep, well-watered root,
Reaching wide its comely fruit!

Nay, but fairer gifts than all
Israel's darling tribe befall:
Heaven my lot with thine unite,
Fierce, belovèd Benjamite!

Yes! Not only "After thee,"
By thy side our place should be!
Whether nobler ranks the deed,
Soul, to follow, or to lead?

Wait no leader! Set for men
Patterns they may trace again!
Dare a Benjamin to be!
Let thy life cry,—“After me!”

“WHO CALLS SO LOUD?”

(Spoken at a Camp of Dublin Fusiliers, on the eve of a
skirmish, Niel's Gap, 1900.)

LIST! Our Mother Country, whom the foëman has
defied,

Calls on all who love her Flag to hasten to be-
friend her:

Canadian, Indian, Saxon, Celt, Australian, side by side
Rally to the Call, and vow to perish or defend her!

Hark! The bugle calls, the bugle calls, the bugle calls
Yonder o'er the dreary veldt, where Britain's hosts are
camping:

Fling the Colours out! At once in line the soldier falls;
Straight as ocean billows, see the ranks go tramping!

Forward, to the battle! Not a look is cast behind;
Tense and eager every eye: each grips his weapon
deadly:

On! The red-spurred horsemen clatter past them like the
wind:

Charge! With panic-striking cheer, they plunge amid
the medley:

On, to where the battle's heart is beating fierce and fast :
On, where from the foeman's trench the lead is hailing
thickly,—

All forgot save Duty's Call, our gallant boys sweep past
To where, around the unsinking Flag, the brave are
falling quickly.

Aid them, God of battles,—Lord of victory and defeat!—
Listen! For some potent hand has stayed the cannon's
roaring :—

Now I see them! Up the steep they swarm with hands
and feet,—

Now, hurrah! It *is* our lads, across the rampart pouring!

Captured! Plant our flag aloft, beside yon shattered gun,—
Let it float there, cheering on our comrade bands ad-
vancing :

See, to right and left the foeman flies! The day is won!
Sunshine thro' the clouds on our triumphant steel is
glancing!

Hush! As o'er the crimsoned field the tumult dies away,
Smites the ear another Call, from stricken sufferers
pealing.

Who shall scan with heart unwrung the relics of the fray?
Room, there, for the Blood-Red Cross,—the ministers
of healing!

Thrilling is the Call of Country :—when the trumpet blows,
Gladdening is stern Duty's Call, each nerve for action
stringing :
Moving, a Comrade's Call for help : but dearest, at the
close,
The Call of Peace, like some sweet Bell, our soldiers
homeward ringing !

COME OVER AND HELP !

SEE from half a world benighted
Yonder beckoning signal waved,—
Lands by Gospel truth unlighted,
Teeming millions, yet unsaved !
Hark ! The grave of many a nation
Stirs, with resurrection rife,
Faintly calling for salvation,
Blindly feeling after life !
China, from long sleep awaking ;
Afric, from the slaver free ;
Heathen Ind, its fetters breaking ;
Islands of the Southern Sea !
O'er all seas our flag we're flying—
Flag with ceaseless vict'ries scarred ;
Over death-strewn fields are plying
" Reeking tube and iron shard : "

When shall peal the sweet Hosanna
From the rescued thralls of Sin?
When shall float the Church's banner
O'er lost tribes, to Christ brought in?

Comrades, help! Our slackness shaming,
Shall a lost World plead in vain?
Jesu, bless! Thy love proclaiming,
Speed we Thy all-conqu'ring reign!

THE PETRINE CLAIM.

“**L**OVEST thou Me? Thrice was the question pressed:
“Lovest thou Me? Lovest thou Me indeed?”
Before to Simon came the high behest
The Flock of Christ to feed.

“Yea, Lord, Thou know'st,” he cried, with anguish wrung:
Then to his hand the Pastoral Staff was given;
Then at his girdle those dread keys were hung
That close and open Heaven!

“Ask not thy brother's lot: follow thou Me,
E'en where thou wouldest not,” the Master saith;
And Peter, following, on th' inverted Tree
Bows his grey head in death.

Ah, Priest! Till love has made thee bold to quaff
Christ's cup of pain, in scorn of sloth and ease,
Think not at Peter's hand to take that Staff,
Or wield those Heavenly Keys!

CHRISTMAS DAY IN AUSTRALIA.

I. John, v, 20.

TIS Christmas; yet 'tis Midsummer, in this New
Land of ours!
We *know* it! Nought but Summer time could yield these
fruits and flowers!
And we *know* 'twas God's Incarnate Son Who in that
Manger lay—
None else could bring this world the Boon, that came on
Christmas Day!

AT A BAPTISM.

Now in His gracious arms, Who said
"Let the young children come to Me,"
This little one in faith be laid,
And given to Christ eternally!

Ah ! doubt not, that a Saviour's love
This helpless babe shall freely share,
And Sacramental blessing prove
Heaven's answer to believing prayer.

Then in Thy Name, O Threefold Lord,
Pledged to be Thine by threefold vow,
The waters on his head be poured,
The Cross be traced upon his brow !

As once, through sprinkled blood secure,
The Cloud led Israel through the Sea,
So, Child, by Holy Seal made sure,
May Covenant Grace thy safeguard be !

So, through Time's waste, o'er vales and steeps
Thy path of life be safely trod
To where a Guardian Angel keeps
Thy place before the Throne of God !

EUREKA.

Lines suggested by II Corinthians, iv, 26.

“**S**HEW me, I beseech thee, Zeus, thy glory,
Prayed a Greek, in mythologic story,
Warned in vain ; and, when the answer came,
Died in whirlwinds of devouring flame !

“Shew me, I beseech, Thy glory, Lord,”
Prayed a Jew, the Sacred Books record;
But—so awful glowed the Holy Light—
Scarce—though veiled by God—survived the sight!

“Shew me, Lord, Thy Glory, I beseech,”
Prays the Christian, yearning still to reach
Higher planes of worship, yet untrod,
Deeper insight in the things of God!

Comes an answer; not the words of fear
Quaking Moses veiled his face to hear!
Not—as Pagans dreamed—by thunder riven
Souls that pant for closer touch with Heaven!

Comes an answer. Lo, to Faith is known
God's true nature, and His glory shown.
Ask we, where to seek that lore unpriced?
Find it “in the Face of Jesus Christ!”

Not in Nature's face; in that may shine
Wisdom absolute, and Might divine,
But God's Love—His Holiness—His Grace
In the realm of Matter who shall trace?

Face of Christ! All brotherly and human;
Strong as of a man, soft as in woman;
Melting tenderly,—with pure wrath burning,—
Stern with purpose,—or in prayer upturning!

Face of Jesus! Sad and sorrow-worn,—
Now in treason kissed,—now struck in scorn,—
With the dew of deadly anguish bathed,—
Drooping on a Cross,—for burial swathed!

Face of Christ! Before that sunlike brow,
Lifted high o'er Death and Suffering now,
Nature flees, and sinners hide, and, rife
With His beauty, throng His Saints to life!

In the face of Jesus Christ displayed,—
God in flesh—for sin an offering made—
Prince victorious, throned all worlds above,
Shines God's glory,—for its name is, Love!

CALM AFTER STORM.

(Psalm cvii, 30, P.B.V.)

“**T**HEN are they glad, because they are at rest!”

So runs, for me, the music from afar
Of yon soft bells, while to the darkening West
The buried Sun bequeaths the Evening Star.

The blast that bugled to the charge on high
The trooping clouds, is still. Glint in the deep
O'erhead the noiseless camp-fires of the sky.
Below, the tired wave sobs itself to sleep.

'Twas Eve: 'tis Night. Stealthily draws the Dark
Its silky curtain round me, fold on fold,
Save where, from yon dim steep, the Lighthouse spark
Keeps ward o'er slumb'ring sea and silent wold.

O sweetest calm, that comes when strife is gone!
Truce after battle;—word that sets him free
To prisoner trembling for his life;— or morn
Of ease that ends some night of agony!

Dear service of the Storm! The day's turmoil
Deepened this peace, that o'er its close doth brood.
Dear service of Life's Evil! 'Tis the foil
And measuring contrast of succeeding good!

"The best wine afterwards," the Master taught;
And "Blessèd ye that mourn and hunger now."
First must the race be run,—the battle fought;
Then twine the wreath, to light the victor's brow!

Than calmest nightfall after wildest day
Sweeter the dreamless slumbers of the Blest.
All echo of Life's Storm has died away,
And "they are glad, because they are at rest!"

HYMN TO THE TRINITY.

TRIUNE GOD ! Thy praise to sing
Every voice conspire for ever ;
Nature all her music bring,
Human Art her best endeavour ;
Every Height its anthem wake,
Every Deep its answer make !

All the Earth doth worship Thee,
Lord of Land, and Air, and Ocean ;
With bowed head and bending knee,
Symbol of the heart's devotion,
All Thy Church glad homage pays,
Lifting high the note of praise !

Unto Thee in loud refrain
Lo ! the full-toned Choir rejoices ;
And the Organ lifts amain
All her multitude of voices :
Ah ! What rapture 'tis to sing
In Thy praise, Eternal King !

O that, as the inbreathed wind
Thrills dumb pipes to sounds of sweetness,

Every heart a voice might find,—
All our souls be tuned to meetness
For the heaven-taught song they pour
In Thy presence evermore!

Mid Thy glory, far above
Yonder sky that arches o'er us,
Seraphs, fired with sinless love,
Chant in never-ceasing chorus,
Than the harp more tuneful far,
Louder than Thy thunders are!

Louder yet one strain shall rise;—
Dearer to the ear of Heaven
Through the Concert of the Skies
Pierce the songs of souls forgiven;
And the Saved shout louder praise
E'en than Angels skill to raise!

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord!
Thou, Who all from nothing spakest:
Thou, Whose blood for men was poured:
Who dead souls to life awakest:
In Thy Name be all our boast,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

TRANSLATIONS, &c.

[Quoted in Romanes' Essays.]

PEU DE CHOSE.

LA Vie est vaine.
Un peu d'amour,
Un peu de haine,
Et puis—Bon jour!

La Vie est brève.
Un peu d'espoir,
Un peu de rêve;
Et puis—Bon soir!]

Translation, in English and Latin:—and an Answer.

A POOR AFFAIR.

How vain is Life!
A little play,
A little strife,
And then—Good day!

How briefly gleams
Its fitful light
Of hope, and dreams;
And then—Good night!

VITA FUROR BREVIS.

Vanius numquid leviusque, Vita?
Ecce, velocis spatium diei
Jactat humanum genus, atque ludit,—
Diligit,—odit,
Credulum frustra! Breviter placenti
Somnio gaudens fruitur: sed atrox
Non opinatum tulit hora finem,—
Vita, valetō!

NON OMNIS MORIAR.

Vita venturæ est hodierna vitæ
Umbra: jucundus zephyri susurrus
Sicut hibernas sequitur procellas
Vere redacto,
Non secus, fausti grave pignus ævi,
Hæret huic vitæ labor atque luctus:
Sol latebrosas cito dissipabit
Crastinus umbras!

‘
RÉPONSE DU CHRÉTIEN.
’

Pas vaine, la Vie.
Elle vite s' avance
Vers l' heure bénie
De recompense.

On pleure ; on dort
Tranquille : enfin
Eclate l' aurore
Du lendemain !

THE CHRISTIAN'S REJOINDER.

Life's real. The field
We till in tears
Rich fruit may yield—
And harvest nears !

Brief space, below,
We toil, we sorrow :
Then rest : and O,
The grand To-morrow !

[Quoted in Romanes' Essays.

The Night has a thousand eyes,
And the Day but one :
Yet the light of a whole world dies
With the setting Sun !

The Mind has a thousand eyes,
And the Heart but one :
Yet the light of the whole life dies
When Love is done !]

AMOR VERA LUX HOMINUM.

Mille oculos Nocti—unum dat Natura Diei,
At lux totum orbem, Sole cadente, fugit !
Mentis mille oculi, est unus tantummodo Cordis :
At vitam e vitâ tollit ademptus Amor !

A GRACE.

BEFORE.

FATHER ! By Thee Earth, Air and Sea
Are with abundance stored ;
For Life, and Food, and every Good,
We bless Thy Name, O LORD !

AFTER.

THOU spread'st our board with plenty, LORD ;
Grant that our Souls may be
For ever fed with Heavenly Bread,
And feast on high with Thee !

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